

## Message Text

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ACTION AID-05

INFO OCT-01 NEA-10 ISO-00 CU-02 PA-01 IGA-02 OES-06 SS-15

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R 130325Z MAY 76

FM AMEMBASSY KATHMANDU

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 5047

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FOR AA/IDC AND NEA

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: EAID, OEXC, NP

SUBJ: AID BICENTENNIAL SATELLITE DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM

REF: STATE 113800, STATE 114338

1. FOLLOWING IS COUNTRY TEAM'S RESPONSE TO QUESTIONS POSED  
REFTELS REGARDING UTILIZATION OF BICENTENNIAL SATELLITE  
DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM IN NEPAL. RESPONSES ARE PEGGED TO  
PARA 12 REFTEL 113800.

2. WE ARE CONFIDENT THAT GOVERNMENT WOULD FACILITATE  
CUSTOMS CLEARANCE. MISSION HAS SUFFICIENTLY GOOD RELATIONS  
WITH CUSTOMS TO ASSURE THAT EQUIPMENT COULD BE CLEARED FREE  
OF DUTY WITHIN 24 HOURS OF ARRIVAL AT AIRPORT.

3. MISSION CAN SUPPLY NECESSARY TRANSPORT FOR IN-COUNTRY  
SETUP, AS WELL AS SHELTER AND SECURITY GUARDS. ALTHOUGH  
DIFFICULT TO ESTIMATE COST, SHOULD BE UNDER \$1000 UNLESS  
INTERNAL AIR TRANSPORT REQUIRED DUE MONSOON, IN WHICH CASE  
COSTS COULD TRIPLE.

4. PROPOSED BROADCAST FREQUENCIES FREE IN NEPAL AND MISSION  
CAN COORDINATE AND OBTAIN PERMISSION FROM HMG.

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5. WE FORESEE NO PROBLEMS REMOTE SENSING BY U.S. EQUIPMENT

WHICH IS, IN FACT, ALREADY BEING DONE IN NEPAL, NOR DO WE EXPECT HOST GOVERNMENT TO RAISE ISSUE OF RIGHT OF DIRECT BROADCAST FROM U.S.

6. NEPAL IS AWARE OF ADVANTAGES OF TYPES OF TECHNOLOGY TO BE PRESENTED AND HAS UTILIZED SOME IN PAST. BY AND LARGE, HOWEVER, BASIC DATA REQUIRED FOR FULL UTILIZATION OF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY DOES NOT EXIST IN COUNTRY SUCH AS COMPLETE AERIAL PHOTO COVERAGE, DECENT MAPS, ETC. WE HAVE RECENTLY UNDERTAKEN SOME STEPS TO INCREASE GOVERNMENT'S AWARENESS OF TECHNOLOGY AVAILABLE, BUT THIS IS LIMITED TO LOWER LEVEL TECHNICIANS DIRECTLY CONCERNED.

7. WE BELIEVE THAT GOVERNMENT WORKING LEVELS, PARTICULARLY THAT INVOLVED IN FOREIGN AID, MIGHT BE DUBIOUS ABOUT DEVELOPMENTAL ADVANTAGES OF PROPOSED PROGRAM. WHILE THEY WOULD PROBABLY SUPPORT RECOMMENDATION TO ACCEPT IT, THEY WOULD BE LESS THAN ENTHUSIASTIC, ARGUING THAT DEVELOPMENT NEEDS CAN BETTER BE MET BY LESS OSTENTATIOUS AND LESS EXPENSIVE METHODS. WE WOULD, HOWEVER, EXPECT THAT DECISION MAKERS AT POLITICAL LEVEL, PARTICULARLY IN PALACE, WOULD WELCOME PROPOSED SATELLITE PROJECT TO GIVE IMPETUS TO THEIR OWN POLITICAL PROGRAMS AIMED AT RURAL DEVELOPMENT. PROGRAM WHICH WOULD ALLOW KING OR HIGH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS TO COMMUNICATE DIRECTLY WITH LEADERS OF COUNTRY'S DEVELOPMENT ZONES WOULD HAVE CONSIDERABLE APPEAL. SIMILARLY IT WOULD PROVIDE GOVERNMENT OPPORTUNITY TO HIGHLIGHT ITS OWN DEVELOPMENT GOALS IN INTERNATIONAL CONTEXT. IT WOULD ALSO RAISE BY CONSIDERABLE FACTOR U.S. VISIBILITY WHICH IS OF IMPORTANCE TO POLITICAL LEADERSHIP. ON BALANCE, THEREFORE, WE BELIEVE THAT PROGRAM WOULD BE ACCEPTED BY HMG PROVIDED IT CAN BE PRESENTED AT SUFFICIENTLY HIGH LEVEL TO OVERCOME BUREAUCRATIC SKEPTICISM.

8. WE WOULD ALSO BE ABLE TO ASSIST IN DEVELOPING LIVE SEGMENT OF PROGRAMMING IN CONSULTATION WITH HOST GOVERNMENT. USIS IS ABLE TO UNDERTAKE PROGRAM OF PUBLICITY AND AUDIENCE SELECTION. WE HAVE NO DOUBTS THAT MISSION COULD PROVIDE ACCESS TO PROGRAM FOR VIRTUALLY ALL DECISION MAKERS IN KATHMANDU AREA, AND HIGH PERCENTAGE IN OUTLYING AREAS. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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9. WE BELIEVE THAT TAPED BICENTENNIAL GREETING FROM SECRETARY KISSINGER WOULD HAVE CONSIDERABLE IMPACT HERE. WHILE WE REALIZE HE WOULD NOT BE AVAILABLE FOR LIVE PANEL DISCUSSION, WE WOULD SUGGEST EITHER SENATOR PERCY OR COUNSEL TO PRESIDENT PHILIP BUCHEN, BOTH OF WHOM ARE HIGHLY REGARDED IN NEPAL.

10. WE WOULD PROPOSE THAT IN COUNTRY PROGRAMMING BE RESTRICTED TO POKHARA AND BIRATNAGAR WITH POSSIBLE ADDITION OF NEPALGUNJ. EACH OF THESE URBAN AREAS IS CLOSELY ASSOCIATED WITH HMG'S DEVELOPMENT DISTRICTS AROUND WHICH DEVELOPMENT PROGRAMS ARE BUILT. WHILE THERE ARE DIRECT TELEPHONE LINKS WITH POKHARA AND BIRATNAGAR, THESE CAN BE DIFFICULT IF NOT IMPOSSIBLE DURING MONSOON PERIOD JUNE 15-OCTOBER 1. IN EMERGENCY WE COULD HAVE ACCESS TO POLICE RADIO NET WHICH CONNECTS KATHMANDU WITH THESE CENTERS BUT NET IS NOT SUITABLE FOR CONTINUING COMMUNICATION.

11. AS FOR AUDIENCE WE COULD REASONABLY EXPECT 200 PERSONS IN KATHMANDU AND 100 AT EACH OF IN COUNTRY SITES. SIZE COULD, OF COURSE, BE INCREASED BUT WOULD NOT THEN BE RESTRICTED TO DECISION MAKERS WE WOULD LIKE TO REACH. ASSUMING, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT PROJECT HAD FULL SUPPORT OF PALACE AUDIENCE SIZE WOULD BE INCREASED TO EXTENT KING OR OTHER OFFICIALS WISHED TO REACH LOCAL OFFICIALS.

12. AS STATED ABOVE WE WOULD INITIALLY PROPOSE SECONDARY SITES AT POKHARA AND BIRATNAGAR. BOTH THESE ARE CONNECTED WITH KATHMANDU BY ROAD, ALTHOUGH ROAD TRAVEL IN AUGUST CAN SOMETIMES BE HAZARDOUS DUE TO LANDSLIDES. IN EMERGENCY WE COULD FALL BACK ON HELICOPTER OR FIXED WING AIR TO BOTH CITIES. IN THIS REGARD DEPARTMENT SHOULD BE AWARE THAT KATHMANDU AIRPORT CAN BE CLOSED FOR UP TO 4 CONSECUTIVE DAYS DURING MONSOON, ALTHOUGH WEATHER DOES IMPROVE PROGRESSIVELY THROUGH AUGUST AND SEPTEMBER.

13. POWER REQUIREMENTS CAN BE MET IN ALL THREE SITES. VOLTAGE CAN FLUCTUATE, BUT WE ARE CONFIDENT WE CAN PROVIDE BACKUP GENERATORS IF REQUIRED.

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14. WE HAVE DISCUSSED PROJECT INFORMALLY WITH CHIRAN THAPA, PRESS SECRETARY TO KING. ALTHOUGH THAPA SAID HE COULD NOT PROVIDE REACTION UNTIL MAY 14, HE PERSONALLY THOUGHT PROGRAM SOUNDED "EXCITING" AND ONE WHICH WOULD FOCUS "DESIRED EMPHASIS" ON U.S. DEVELOPMENT ASSISTANCE IN NEPAL. THAPA APPEARED TO BE INTRIGUED BY POSSIBILITIES OFFERED IN PROGRAM, PARTICULARLY IN COUNTRY. WE WILL REPORT UNOFFICIAL PALACE REACTION WHEN RECEIVED.

15. WHILE WE APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT'S ASSESSMENT THAT NEPAL SHOULD BE PLACED IN HIGH PRIORITY CATEGORY FOR PROJECT, BASED ON CRITERIA OF DEMONSTRATED INTEREST AND POTENTIAL UTILIZATION OF ADVANCED TECHNOLOGY, MISSION BELIEVES THAT NEPAL SHOULD MORE RIGHTLY BE PLACED IN SECOND CATEGORY. ALTHOUGH INTEREST IN PROGRAMS SUCH AS ERTS IS RELATIVELY

HIGH, IT IS DIFFICULT TO MAKE FULL USE OF SUCH TECHNOLOGY  
GIVEN LIMITED RESOURCES AVAILABLE. WE BELIEVE THAT  
GREATEST VALUE OF PROPOSED SATELLITE PROJECT WOULD BE TO  
PROVIDE INFORMATION TO HIGHEST LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT IN HOPES  
THAT THIS WOULD PROVIDE IMPETUS TO LOWER LEVELS OF GOVERNMENT  
TO DEVELOP PROGRAMS UTILIZING TECHNOLOGY. WE ALSO BELIEVE  
THAT POLITICAL IMPACT OF PROPOSED PROJECT WOULD BE  
CONSIDERABLE, ALTHOUGH FOLLOW-ON USE OF TECHNOLOGY WOULD  
BE SLOWER. ON BALANCE, THEREFORE, WE WOULD HOPE THAT  
NEPAL CAN BE INCLUDED IN PROJECT AND THAT WE COULD OBTAIN  
PALACE SUPPORT TO ASSURE WIDE AND SIGNIFICANT IMPACT. EAVES

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